



African Microbicides Advocacy Group

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**INTERNATIONAL
PARTNERSHIP for
MICROBICIDES**

Global Health Leaders React to G8's First-Ever Call for More Investment in Microbicides to Protect Women from HIV

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Joint Statement From:

Zeda Rosenberg, CEO, International Partnership for Microbicides (IPM)

Polly Harrison, Director, Alliance for Microbicide Development (AMD)

Lori Heise, Director, Global Campaign for Microbicides (GCM)

Manju Chatani, Coordinator, African Microbicides Advocacy Group (AMAG)

This year's G8 summit in Gleneagles marks an important milestone in the industrialized world's commitment to global health and development. The G8 has taken an important step today by recognizing for the first time the urgent need to develop a safe and effective microbicide and calling for advance purchase commitments and other innovative financing tools to encourage increased investment in microbicide and vaccine research and development. An effective microbicide would give women the power to protect themselves from HIV infection and stop the feminization of the HIV epidemic. Microbicides are especially needed in sub-Saharan Africa, where three-quarters of the world's HIV-infected women live.

“We welcome the G8 Gleneagles Africa Statement, which, for the first time, cites the importance of microbicides in the fight against HIV/AIDS, said Dr. Joerg F. Maas, the Executive Director of the German Foundation for World Population (DSW). “We hope the German Government will act on the declaration through financial support for microbicides so that the goal of finding a safe and effective product as soon as possible will be reached. Only when the existing methods of HIV prevention are paired with innovative methods like microbicides, can the spread of HIV/AIDS be stopped.”

“We are gratified that the G8 has recognized the importance of microbicides in the fight against HIV/AIDS. I am confident that with political leadership, sufficient financial resources, collaborative efforts and product development expertise, a microbicide will be available to women in Africa to help control the HIV/AIDS pandemic,” said Dr. Zeda Rosenberg, Chief Executive Officer of the International Partnership for Microbicides.

“Now the G8 must follow through on its commitment and dramatically scale up funding for research and development of microbicides, which could save millions of lives. Investment in microbicides must double to US\$280 million per year,” said Dr. Polly Harrison, Director of the Alliance for Microbicide Development.

“Today’s announcement from the G8 is an important step forward for the world’s women, who desperately need a method of HIV prevention that they can initiate, rather than rely on men’s willingness to be faithful or to use condoms,” said Lori Heise, Director of the Global Campaign for Microbicides.

Manju Chatani, the Coordinator of the African Microbicides Advocacy Group, added, “We believe a microbicide will provide a powerful new option for African women to protect themselves. We encourage the G8 to also support efforts towards preparing for future access to effective microbicides, now.”

Microbicides are products such as gels or creams that could be applied topically to the vagina, reducing transmission of HIV during sexual intercourse. Studies of various formulations are underway and include a vaginal ring designed to release a microbicide slowly over time. An effective microbicide could kill or otherwise immobilize HIV; form a barrier between the virus and vaginal tissue; boost the vagina’s natural defenses against HIV; or prevent the virus from replicating after it enters the cells in the vagina.

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The African Microbicides Advocacy Group (AMAG) is a coalition of microbicide advocates from organisations and institutions based and/or working in various African countries. AMAG was launched in March 2004 at the International Microbicides Conference 2004. <http://www.global-campaign.org/amag.htm>

The Alliance for Microbicide Development is a global, multisectoral, multidisciplinary coalition founded to foster the development of microbicides to prevent HIV/AIDS through advocacy, communication, convening and addressing critical problems in practice and policy. <http://www.microbicide.org>

The Global Campaign for Microbicides is an international movement of activists, citizens and non profit organizations dedicated to accelerating access to new HIV prevention tools, especially for women. <http://www.global-campaign.org>

The International Partnership for Microbicides was established to accelerate the development and accessibility of microbicides to prevent the transmission of HIV. Through the screening of compounds, designing optimal formulations, establishing manufacturing capacity, developing trial sites and conducting access studies, the organization works to improve the efficiency of all efforts to develop and deliver safe and effective microbicides as soon as possible. <http://www.ipm-microbicides.org>